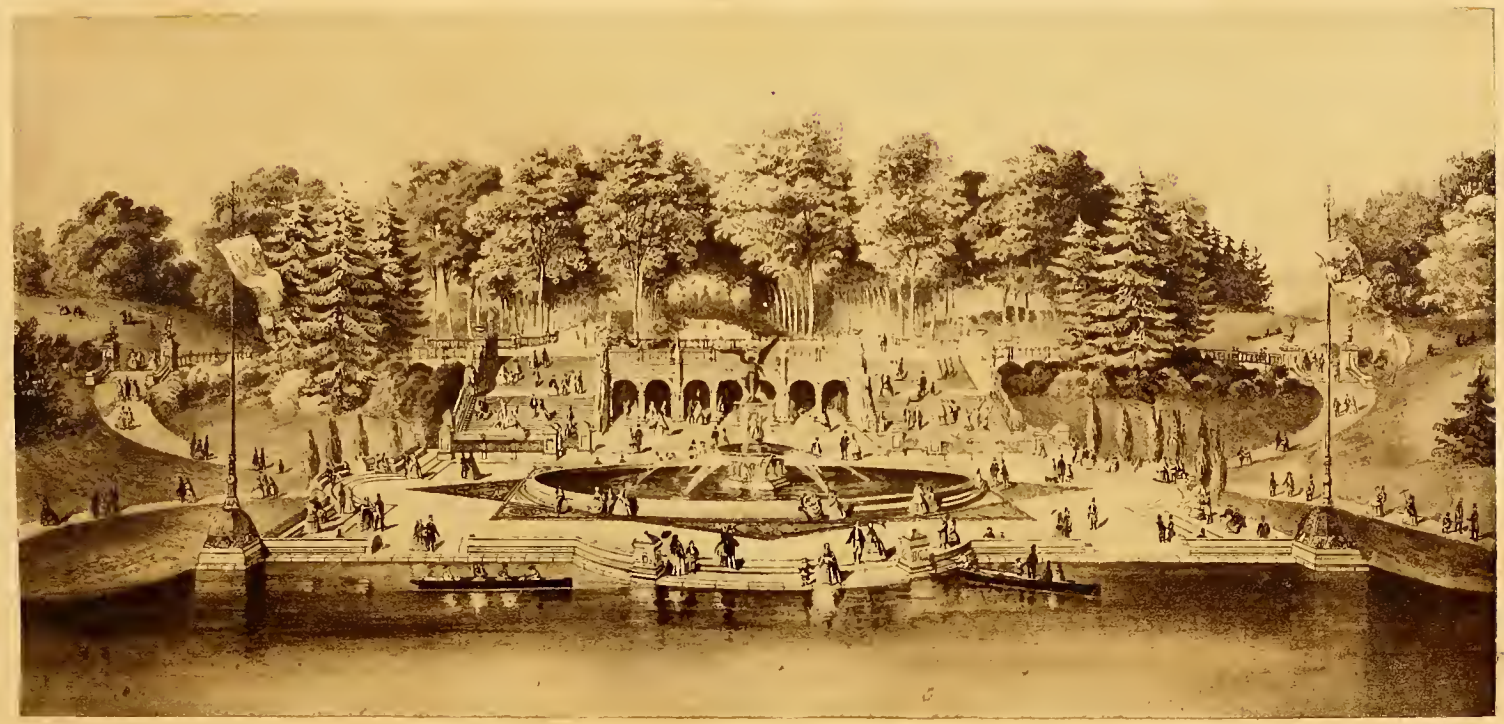

THE

CENTRAL PARK:

PHOTOGRAPHED

BY W. H. GUILD, Jr.,

WITH

DESCRIPTIONS AND A HISTORICAL SKETCH,

BY FRED. B. PERKINS.

"I know each lane, and every valley green,
* * * * *
And every bosky bourn, from side to side."—Comus.

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Dedication.

TO

THOSE FEW BUT TRIED FRIENDS

WHOSE

PERSEVERANCE, TASTE, ENTERPRISE, AND MEANS

STIMULATED AND SECURED

THE ORIGINATION, EXECUTION AND PUBLICATION

OF

THIS WORK,

IT IS, AS A PARTIAL TESTIMONY TO THEIR

ENCOURAGING AND SELF-SACRIFICING KINDNESS AND ZEAL,

(AND BY ESPECIAL PERMISSION)

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

No collection of views of the Park completely satisfactory, as an artistic production, can be made these ten years. Then, the grounds will be laid out, the buildings finished, the foliage massed and lined, the pedestals of the Terrace occupied by their destined statuary. And whenever a better book than this shall appear, and better pictures, the makers of these will cordially welcome them.

The Historical Sketch is chiefly concerned about the æsthetic career of the Park. Its political and financial management were far less safe, and not as appropriate subjects for this book. But none the less are remembrance and credit due to the Board of Commissioners, collectively and individually, for the great amount of obscure and severe labor which they have unstintedly bestowed in securing appropriations, overcoming and conciliating political and personal oppositions and interests.

The descriptions in this book were written in the presence of the scenes described. They are set down as if in the course of a walk about the Park, and as if orally delivered to a companion, with the pictures in hand meanwhile. Various things

are thus told which the pictures do not show, but which may be seen at the places mentioned, or were seen there; and the book becomes, to a certain extent, a guide to the Park, as well as a series of descriptions of it.

It is necessary here to amend the sketch of the history of the Park, by adding one interesting fact, which was not at hand until after the work had gone to press. This is, that the merit of first suggesting this great public work, instead of being of doubtful ownership, belongs to the thoughtful and musical Poet, the practical, clear-headed, and strong-minded Editor, and fearless and thorough-going friend of humanity and freedom, William Cullen Bryant. In a letter from England to *The Evening Post*, dated June 24, 1845, Mr. Bryant, citing the example of the London Parks, urged forcibly the establishment of "a range of parks and public gardens along the central part of the island or elsewhere;" and afterwards repeatedly discussed and advocated the project in the *Post*.

The vignette on the title-page shows the Music Pavilion, as seen through one of the stately portals between the Drive and the Mall. Thus viewed, the unbarred gateway and pleasant scene within seem to say, "Enter;" and may properly stand upon our title-page, since no outer gateway yet exists to be pictured.

The frontispiece is a prophecy. It is a photograph from an engraving on stone of the Terrace and the Mall, somewhat as they are to look in time to come—with fountain, statuary, and adornments complete, and the shadowy leafage of the trees canopying the Mall.

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DESCRIPTIONS OF VIEWS.

THE CENTRAL PARK.

READER, suppose yourself standing with me on the front steps of the Astor House. It is a four miles' ride hence to the Central Park. We may reach its southern central entrance by the Sixth Avenue cars, which start from the south side of this hotel. Or the Eighth Avenue cars, the red ones which set out from the same place, will carry us to the south-western corner of the Park, or to a side entrance at Seventy-second Street. Or again, the Third Avenue cars, whose red sides glow over there across the street, will set us down two blocks from the eastern side, at Seventy-second Street, opposite the heart of the Park—the Mall and the Terrace. Come; we will go by the Sixth Avenue. It is a long ride. Let us beguile the way by a bird's eye view of the past history of the Park; a bird's "mind's eye, Horatio," if so we may say.

ON the 5th of April, 1851, when Mayor Kingsland sent in to the Aldermen a special message urging the necessity of a spacious public park for the great city, much interest had already for some time been felt and expressed in favor of some

such plan. In consequence of the Mayor's message, the city, in the proper form, asked the State for leave to make a park out of Jones's Wood; a tract of land of about one hundred and fifty acres, on the East River, between Sixty-fourth and Seventy-fifth Streets.

Leave was given, but the attempt to place the Park in so distant a corner quickly began to be unpopular, and an active opposition arose in favor of a more central place. A. J. Downing, between whom and the poet Bryant lies the credit of having been first to suggest the Central Park, urged forcibly, in his magazine, the *Horticulturist*, for August, 1851, the establishment of a park of at least five hundred acres, somewhere "between Thirty-ninth Street and the Harlem River," describing, as attainable in such a place, many of the advantages and attractions since actually introduced into the Park.

On the 5th of the same August, 1851, the Aldermen, obeying public sentiment, appointed a committee to look for a better situation for the Park; for it was now a settled thing that some park was to be had. That committee reported ably and at length in favor of the present site; and, on petition, the State once more gave the city leave to take the ground desired.

A pretty obstinate contest now followed with the partisans of the Jones's Wood scheme, and the majority of one legislative committee, in June, 1853, made a report strongly leaning in favor of the Jones's Wood plan. Hon. James E. Cooley, however, presented a cogent argument, in a minority report, for the Central Park. Two years later, in March, 1855, an ordi-

nance, cutting off nearly all the southern half of the Park, passed both branches of the Common Council, and was only stopped by Mayor Wood's veto. This measure would have effectually crippled the design.

All this opposition, however, did no more than to retard the enterprise. The Jones's Wood bill was repealed in April, 1854; and at last, after six years of legislation and management for and against, a Board of Commissioners of the Central Park, consisting of Mayor Wood and Street Commissioner Taylor, was appointed by a city ordinance, approved May 21, 1856. These gentlemen very sensibly invited seven most competent persons to act in consultation with them. These were, Washington Irving, who was made President of the Board, George Bancroft, James E. Cooley, who had already fought so good a battle for the Park in the Legislature and elsewhere, Charles F. Briggs, James Phalen, Charles A. Dana, and Stewart Brown. This Board had, however, no money of consequence in its hands, and did but little except consult and procure some preliminary surveys. In April, 1857, the Board was reorganized by the Legislature, substantially on its present footing, and proper funds provided.

In the beginning of 1858, the Board offered four premiums of two thousand dollars, one thousand dollars, seven hundred and fifty dollars, and five hundred dollars, respectively, for the first, second, third, and fourth best plans for laying out the Park. That presented by Frederic Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, was accepted nearly as offered, on May 18, 1858; Mr. Olmsted was appointed architect-in-chief, and Mr. Vaux consulting architect. A working force was at once organized, and

about June 1, 1858, the proper work of laying out the Park was commenced.

Mr. Olmsted is a native of Hartford, Conn., and has made himself two enviable reputations: one as an observer and thinker, chiefly by his very valuable and interesting works of travel and statistics on the Slave States; and one as an organizer and administrator, by his much more remarkable skill and success in designing and directing the work of the Park, and, subsequently, in conducting the vast operations of the Sanitary Commission. Mr. Vaux is a gentleman of English birth, an architect of established reputation in New York. Messrs. Olmsted and Vaux remained in their posts—the former, however, only nominally, after becoming Secretary of the Sanitary Commission—until the year 1863.

SIX years ago, when Messrs. Olmsted and Vaux took charge of the Park, their prospect was singularly unpromising. When they escorted friends of taste and culture to one and another point of view, and described what they intended to have in so many years, in one place and another, they were heard with politeness, but, so utterly hopeless did the place appear, with pretty thorough incredulity. Nor is this surprising. A forbidding and sterile tract of rugged gneiss rock, one of the intractable primary formations, occupied much of the area of the Park. Its tough ledges stood out in the weather, bald, useless, and unsightly, or were barely covered by a thin and dry layer of earth, sparsely sprinkled with grass

and weeds. In its undrained hollows stood stagnant pools, or cold swamps and bogs. A few trees grew here and there, and swamp bushes tufted its nooks. The built-up portion of the city did not reach so far, and this peculiarly dreary region was one of its most unlovely suburbs. In various portions of its savage territory, tribes of squalid city barbarians had encamped, and, in dirty shanties or in the open air, drove the fetid business of bone-boiling—"dreadful trade;" nourished herds of measly swine upon the sickish feculence of distilleries, or murdered rapid successions of wretched "stump-tail" cows, who dissolved bodily into mere rottenness on the same nauseous food, as they stood in the stalls, poisoning the city infants with their infectious milk as they died. Cinder-sifters, rag-pickers, and swill-men constituted its more cleanly or aristocratic classes, unless now and then some thief or bolder criminal glorified its huts or holes with a more famous presence. It was a miserable realm of barrenness, stench, filth, poverty, lawlessness, and crime.

Such was much of the southern portion of the Park territory. Further north the rock is limestone, and the surface less sterile. Two or three decent houses stood within the Park limits, including the Catholic Convent of Mount St. Vincent. In some portions of the whole area, a few acres of poorish pasturage or of tillable land were here and there found.

Since June, 1857, the progress of the Park has been one of uninterrupted success, scarcely rippled now and then by attempts to force the enterprise into the same disreputable political relations which control nearly all the other public works of the city, or to break up the organization of its indus-

trial army, for the sake of gratifying some personal enmity. The most important of these attempts was that made by Mr. James Hogg, an ex-commissioner, Robert J. Dillon, and F. A. Conkling. A committee of the State Senate was appointed, in 1861, to investigate the affairs of the Park, which heard patiently all the charges made by these gentlemen, and examined diligently into both the financial and artistic aspects of the enterprise. The result was a most triumphant vindication of the entire honesty and eminent ability and success of the work. The charges brought were altogether frivolous.

IT would be interesting to trace down the progress of the work on the Park, year by year, but the story, though very valuable, would be too long. All that can be done is to attempt a brief statement of some of the leading points and purposes of its design.

The Park is a parallelogram five times as long as it is wide, nearly in the centre of the island of New York. It extends half a mile across, from Fifth to Eighth Avenues, and two and a half miles lengthwise, from Fifty-ninth Street to One Hundred and Sixth Street.

Besides the natural difficulties of the ground, which we have mentioned, there were two other principal ones. The first was the cutting in two of the Park by the old and new Receiving Reservoirs of the Croton Water-works, the latter a vast sheet of one hundred and six acres in extent, and capable of containing the whole monstrous navy of the United States. These great

bodies of water served as a wall, halving the possibilities of grand views and imposing landscape; and making it necessary to lay out two parks, connected by narrow belts of land each side of the Reservoirs.

The second difficulty was the absolute necessity of permitting free passage for traffic across the two and a half miles in length of the Park area. To close this would unendurably separate the future business of the city, which must one day be enormous, across between the East and the North Rivers. And to admit it, seemed necessarily to profane the quiet elegance of the Park, by the noise, and dirt, and homely features of trade, labor, and commerce.

The former of these difficulties was met by accepting it, making the Upper Park a scene of wide and open glades, meadows, hills, and valleys; in short, a well-kept woodland; while the Lower Park was much more elaborately treated, somewhat in garden style, and its features and capacities so managed as to leave the visitor under a grateful delusion. Unless of remarkably well-trained eye, the lower Park appears far larger than it really is, even in its present imperfect state; and it is very easy to lose all perception of points of compass, and thus to wander at will with almost such a sense of vastness, as that which we feel in the wild woods themsleves. In the middle of it is the heart of the Park, the long avenue of elms called the Mall, with the Music Pavilion in its upper or northern end, and terminated by the rich and highly finished Terrace. This consists of a bridge, with elaborate architectural and sculptured decorations, carrying the main drive across the head of the Mall; while stairs, from its further side and below it, lead to

the ornamented area of the great Fountain, and to the Lake, where the swans play and the boats are riding.

This is the Heart of the Park; its richest and most elaborate scene. It was judged that, for this great democratic pleasure ground, such a scene, open to the sky, was far more appropriate than the close exclusiveness of a house. In this place would have been put the mansion of the gentleman or the castle of the baron, had such owned the Park. It is the Democratic Palace. Around it lie, in different directions, the Ball Ground, the Parade, the Collection of Animals, and the Skating Pond; while, on the further shore of the Lake, the bold, rough, rocky slope called the Ramble has been laid out in sinuous and complicated walks, and thickly planted with shrubbery and flowers, to form a proper foreground for the view northward from the Mall, a pleasant loitering ground, and an example of good garden management. Around the borders of the Lower Park the planting has been so disposed, that, in course of time, a belt of foliage will shut out the brick and mortar of the surrounding city; and such buildings as were needed have been mostly kept back along the same belt, thus avoiding to break up the open spaces of the interior.

The other difficulty, of accommodating the transverse city traffic and passengers, was met in a manner singularly ingenious. The transverse roads, four in number, were sunk, and carried across the Park at such a depth as to conceal all that passed. At the sides of these roads, and at the bridges over them, fringes of trees and shrubs aid the disposition of the ground in this concealment, so that the world of toil is effectually prevented from thrusting its skeleton into the æsthetic feast of the

guests in the Park. So simply and plainly did this device meet the case, that it had much weight in deciding the Board of Commissioners to adopt the plan which contained it.

These four roads, of course, shredded the Park into five segments, even more cleanly than the Reservoirs did into two. This, however, only enabled the architects to show another proof of sense and skill. Their plan was boldly carried out, without suffering these chasms to break up any of its important features; and numerous bridges, of proper size and design, all having the same sedulous protection against any glimpse into the arid world of business, carried the roads and paths whither they were to go.

I have thus rapidly described the course of legislation which secured the site of the Park, the raw and forbidding features of that site when chosen, a few among the difficulties encountered in planning it, the way in which they were met, and some few of the characteristics of its design. Even in its present half-finished condition, it is quite practicable to describe and estimate the Park as a result; for its main features have been fixed according to the original plan, and the completion of the work will, of course, only add to their full development.

The Central Park is the eighth in size of the great public pleasure-grounds of the world. The seven larger ones are—the Prater at Vienna, Phœnix Park at Dublin, Hampton Court and Bushy Parks (together) near London, the Bois de Boulogne at Paris, Richmond Park near London, the Gardens at Versailles,

and Windsor Great Park; whose dimensions are successively from the one thousand five hundred acres of the Prater, up to the three thousand five hundred of the Great Park at Windsor.

The Park is multiform. Few things can be estimated in so many different senses; because very few human undertakings aim to accomplish so many different results.

Thus:

Dynamically,—as a job of work,—as the foremen's returns would sum it,—as Mr. George Law might see it,—the Park was, on January 1, 1863, the latest day of published returns, the result of about one million and a quarter days' works. These days' works, not reckoning a variety of smaller items, have excavated and carted two and a half millions of cubic yards of earth and stone; excavated three hundred and four thousand cubic yards of rock, by blowing it out with one hundred and sixty-six tons of powder; built about eighty-seven thousand cubic yards of masonry; laid nearly four hundred thousand feet of sewers and drains, and nearly eighty thousand feet of water-pipes; laid more than six million brick; and set out more than one hundred and sixty thousand trees and shrubs. This is work and material enough to build quite a city.

Financially,—as an investment of capital,—as the treasurer's report might sum it,—as the Stock Exchange might view it,—the Park now represents an expenditure of more than seven millions of dollars. This, too, is thus invested by a nation the most sharply practical in the world, and charged with being the most pecuniary in aim and motive; and for objects all of which are wise, and either essentially benevolent or essentially æsthetic.

But against this debit of seven million dollars may be set a sum of *twenty-two and a half millions* of dollars, being the increased value, since 1856, of the real estate in the three wards surrounding the Park, and of which a considerable part is due to the influence of the Park. The tax received by the city on this increase is three hundred and eighty thousand three hundred and forty-eight dollars and twenty-four cents, which lacks only fifty-eight thousand and four dollars and thirty-two cents of paying the whole interest on the Park stock (at six per cent., however). But this shows that the Park is, in fact, a wonderfully cheap luxury. It costs each soul in New York, by these figures, at present, about the quotient of fifty-eight thousand dollars divided by seven hundred and fifty thousand, a low estimate for the population of the city; that is, a little more than *seven cents* a year.

Topographically,—as a map,—as Mr. Disturnell or Mr. Woolworth Colton might estimate it,—it occupies, including up to One Hundred and Tenth Street, eight hundred and forty-three acres and a fraction, lying in a parallelogram half a mile wide, and two and a half long. Of this space, the new Reservoir occupies one hundred and six acres, and the old one thirty-five; the Lake at the Mall twenty acres, and three other smaller bodies of water about nine acres more. Three systems of ways for travel, besides the transverse roads, conduct visitors around the Park; a carriage drive, a bridle-road, and footpaths. Archways carry the bridle-road under or over the drive, and the footpath under or over both the others, when they are to be crossed; so that, by merely keeping in the footpath, children, invalids, and feeble folk are in no danger of being run over.

There are now opened about eight miles of drive, four and a half miles of bridle-road, and eighteen and a half miles of foot-path. The Mall and Terrace are a little to the right of the middle of the Lower Park, as you look northward. Behind it, down at the southeast corner, is the Skating Pond, and off at the right of the north end of the latter is the Arsenal. Over to the west, the Ball Ground and the Parade, the largest spaces in the lower end of the Park, stretch up to a point abreast of the Mall. From the north end of the Mall you go down through the grand staircase, under the bridge, to the great Fountain, and pass on to the Lake, on whose waters float eleven boats and a gondola. Over the water, the wild and shrubby Ramble lies before you on the rough hillside, and the view is closed by the wooden bell-frame now standing on Vista Rock, at the southwest corner of the Old Reservoir; but which structure is to be replaced by an ornamental one. Among the trees, at the upper end of the Mall, is the Music Pavilion; at your right hand, looking north, the vine-covered walk stretches along the rocks that skirt the Mall; and, near by, the solid Casino crowns another part of the same ledge. Still further back, and to the right, is the Zoological Collection, within a delicate but sufficient wire fence. Over towards Fifth Avenue, and northeast from your position at the head of the Mall, hidden by the ledge on which stand the Vine Walk and the Casino, are constructing the Flower Garden and the Conservatory. And these are the chief artificial features of the map. Its natural features are, in the Upper Park, broad, grand slopes and vales, of clear and impressive form, which are not to be interfered with by the work of the Park, but enhanced rather. Those of the Lower

Park are somewhat more subdivided, as if to afford sites for the more varied and detailed works executed there. A rugged hill-side, part of which is occupied by the Ramble, stretches across the Park, below the old Reservoir; a table-land occupies most of the central and western part of the space below, while the eastern part is undulating; and a belt of more rugged and rocky ground runs across the south end of the Park. The highest natural ground in the Park is Summit Rock, west of the old Reservoir, one hundred and thirty-six feet above tide; but part of Vista Rock, over the tunnel, at the southwest corner of the old Reservoir, has been raised six feet higher. The lowest point is at One Hundred and Seventh Street, near Fifth Avenue, and is just two-tenths of a foot, or two and one-thirtieth inches, below tide.

Administratively,—as a specimen of governmental and executive organization,—as Mr. Corning of the Central Railroad, or Mr. Marsh of the Erie, might consider it,—it consists of a Board of Consulting and Directing Commissioners, a single Executive Officer, and two separate forces under him; the working force and the police force.

The working force was, during the heaviest part of the labor, at an average, three thousand men, and has been as high as three thousand six hundred. During 1862, it was one thousand two hundred and seven. This force is worked in gangs of from twenty to fifty men, each gang under a foreman; from six to ten gangs are formed into a "division," under a "general foreman;" and the superintendent of the works (now Superintending Engineer Grant) has immediate charge and authority over the whole. A wise code of regulations was

prepared by Mr. Olmsted for the government of this force, and is still in use.

The police force consists of about fifty officers, selected for good personal appearance, good manners, and good judgment. They pervade the Park; keeping the gates and patrolling the walks and rides. Their uniform is much like that of the Metropolitan Police, but is of gray, instead of blue. They are civil, accommodating, and efficient. Out of the whole number of four million one hundred and ninety-five thousand six hundred and ninety-five visits to the Park during 1862, only one hundred and thirty-five resulted in conduct requiring arrest, of which one hundred and three were for driving too fast; a misdemeanor which is found to be rife on afternoons and holidays. This force, like the working force, is under the orders of the executive officer of the Board.

Hygienically,—as an intelligent physician of reformatory tendencies might look at it,—Dr. Griscom, of New York, for instance,—it is an inestimable spiracle or lung for the carbonizing and ill-aerated city. Here the sallow business man or sallow beauty may come, and, perchance, pick up again a few leaves of their wasted roses. The fresh air, that smells of field and woodland; the quiet of some solitary nook, or the festive atmosphere of any denser crowd; the decorative architecture, the pleasure-boats, the incapacity of non-enjoyment which belongs to the plan and execution of all and every part of the Park—all these influences have a strangely powerful force. They compel the soul. It is almost impossible to do any thing in the Park but rest, breathe sweet air, and enjoy. It is a kind of resurrection; in this fair, new world, we remem-

ber dimly those invoices, newspapers, writs, and other bondages, but they are only remembrances; they have nothing to do with this pleasant place; perhaps they do not, in fact, really exist! Nothing short of the tinkle of the car-bells, or the joggle of the city pavement, drags us back out of our vision, and thrusts us down again into the malodorous drudging city. Doubtless, the Park is lengthening the average life of the citizens.

To show how extensively the influence of the Park is spreading, I may repeat the total I named a few moments ago, of the number of visits to the Park during 1862; it is four million one hundred and ninety-five thousand six hundred and ninety-five. "*Persons*" is the term used in the Park reports; but many people go there habitually or frequently, though not enough to make the whole number of visitors small. Over twenty-five thousand of these visits included boating on the Lake; a very large, but unrecorded, number were for skating; more than four hundred thousand were on the twenty-one "music days."

Æsthetically,—as a poet or an artist might imagine it, Mr. Inness or Mr. Bryant, for instance:—many beautiful things, pure air, landscape views, whole chapters of spirited studies in decorative art, flower-gardens, and the collected shrubs and trees of this region and of others too; the subtler pleasures of music; the yet loftier and truer delight of seeing happy multitudes; the consciousness of belonging to a nation capable of desiring, creating, and enjoying so much beauty—all these fill the Park with the elements of beauty, with things and thoughts proper to stir into activity the best powers of artist or of poet.

Socially,—as Henry Ward Beecher, the friend of all good amusements and enjoyments, might like to view it,—the Park is what I have already called it—a great democratic pleasure-ground; a proof of the ease and the natural method by which a democracy can create, for its own enjoyment, gardens as elaborate, costly, and magnificent, as those of monarchs. No visitor needs to send in a card to the proprietor, or to request permission to inspect his "valuable collection." To be a visitor is to exercise ownership in it. It is his who will but enter and enjoy. Only by staying outside, indeed, can we avoid exercising ownership in it. Nor is there any distinction of persons, other than ethical. Disorder and disgustfulness are excluded; otherwise, the poorest owns as much of the Park as the richest. The dirty-faced baby of the shanty runs, squalls, and grubs in the gravel as freely as the rich man's bescrubbed and bedizened infant—and far more so; and far more does he enjoy it too. What is a lace ruffle about his drawers, or a feather in his hat, or a fiery-red mantle, to a little child, compared with nice dirt, and freedom to disport himself therein? Truly, less than nothing, and vanity. Indeed, not only does the poor man have whatever the rich man can, in the Park, but much that he cannot. Hundreds of sweet, quiet nooks, pleasant corners of water scenery, little shady bowers, higher "coignes of vantage," accurately chosen view-points—all these *must* be walked to. Nature will be wooed in humility. She is like Elisha of old; they that come with chariots and horses, and gold and raiment, may, perhaps, receive some word as by a messenger, as Naaman did. If he had gone humbly on foot, doubtless Elisha would have himself spoken with him.

Nature will not be visible from more than six feet high. So the Park is a pleasure-ground, because it was made to be; and a democratic one, because, being of natural rather than artificial features, it must be. By silent, constant ministrations, it is in sundry ways teaching the greater social ethics—equality of privilege, liberty under law, the greatest good for, as well as of, the greatest number.

Morally,—as perhaps Dr. Tyng might be, with graver analysis, disposed to consider it,—every one of the usefulnesses of the Park is a direct promotive of good morals; for good morals are bettered by good health, by innocent enjoyment, by the sight and intercourse of what is beautiful. Yet still the most striking ethical significance of the Park is in this: that it proves and expresses great, and essential, and foreseeing, and deliberate kind-heartedness in our citizens of to-day, who provide for posterity a scene of recreation and a source of health which cannot, in the nature of things, grow to a just completeness until many of its originators are dead.

Last of all—Intellectually, in sum and total, altogether; as, after venturing to specify all those eminent men, I must of necessity attempt to set forth that which the Park is:

It becomes, perhaps, most admirable, when considered as a wonderfully symmetrical combination of means, successfully contrived to serve many purposes; that is, as a great monument of Creative Intellect; both for conceptive imagination, and for realizing executive talent. For foresight, imagination, wisdom, system, complexity, order, and energy, the history and the works of the Park are a very noble study. Even in the original design, prepared in 1858, the necessity of including

the land up to One Hundred and Tenth Street, was understood and silently allowed for, so that now, when this space is actually to be added, it exactly completes the design of the Park; and in adjusting all its features, allowance was consistently made for a state of things at least twenty years in the future. In preparing that design, its makers were obliged to body forth within their own thoughts the green meadows, the masses and lines of trees and shrubbery, the bridges and structures, the lakes and fountains, sweeping drives and winding pathways, shadowing out all this beauty over an actuality of the extremest barrenness and filth. So wisely and systematically was the plan contrived that it meets all requirements of passengers and commerce, of the baby in arms, the capitalist's coach or the horseman's steed. So wisely and strongly was the administrative machine constructed, that its economy has been marked and great, the work done with singular faithfulness and regularity, and the whole kept almost unstained by the rotting influence of political interference.

Unfinished as it is, the Central Park already links fast to the names of its two designers, the high praise of having created by far the greatest public work on the American continent, for grandeur, beauty, purity, and success.

That Mr. Olmsted and Mr. Vaux have not remained at the head of their own great work is much to be regretted, however efficient subsequent administration may be. The originating mind should complete its own work. Yet it is gratifying to know, that their plan could in fact scarcely be radically altered, without the utter overturn and destruction of the face of the Park; that their designs are still carried forward

in good faith, their methods of work and government still followed, and their plan for the additional ground between One Hundred and Sixth and One Hundred and Tenth Streets on record, and approved by the Commissioners.

While, therefore, they are gone, their intellect still presides over the work; and the experience and ability of the hands into which the succession has fallen, are such as to warrant the harmonious completion of this grand enterprise.

Here we are at the Sixth Avenue entrance, which Mr. Vaux would happily designate the Artist's Gate; the best, because the bold scenery of natural rock and water strikes with sudden force and point, the pilgrim through four rigid miles of stiff, dirty, ignoble human street. At the same time, with the same subtle wisdom of thought which characterizes so many of the conceptions of the Park, there is no absolutely best walk, best ride, best drive. As one of the original designers of the Park well remarked, "the purpose was to tempt everybody everywhere." And yet, faithful to the pure democracy of their doctrines, the best, most various, and most numerous views, lie along the paths of the walkers. It is only they who can fully gain the knowledge of the motto on our title-page. The rider must find in his exercise, and the occupants of carriages in their vehicular dignity, what compensation they may for the loss of all the endless minor beauties of the Park, and many of its chiefest ones.

Enough of preaching. We enter; and from a teacher I subside into a *valet de place*.

I.—SUMMER-HOUSE NEAR ARTIST'S GATE.

COME up this winding path to the left, to the Summer-House on the Rocks, represented in View No. 1. It is a substantial and shapely rustic structure, of thirty or forty feet across, consisting of a hexagonal roof with posts, open sides, a flagged floor, and two ranges of seats around it within. Except the seats themselves, it is of cedar with the bark on.

It is a breezy and sightly spot; the coolest resting-place in the Park in hot summer days. I have enjoyed many quiet hours under its rough brown roof. Standing in the middle of the floor, we may look around upon a panorama. Any one who will be so unscriptural as to look back upon the wicked city from which he has escaped, will first see straight before him a mob of rocks and shanties, a specimen of what the Park itself formerly was. More to the left or east, are the brick and freestone masses of the city, the yellowish-gray pile of St. Luke's Hospital standing boldly out in front. Down here to the southeast, the quiet Skating Pond nestles among rocks, and greensward, and growing trees. A gray, bald-headed gneiss ledge rises above it toward its northern portion, like a steady old guardian protecting a modest young lady. Further to the left is the castellated Arsenal, and one of the ornamental bridges. Beyond, the throng of carriages moves with that singular distant effect of a molecular motion both ways at once, which such processions have. Through this little vista to the north, that is the white marble bridge which

gleams over the leaves, and the roof of the Casino shows beyond it. Still to the left you can descry obscurely the people moving about the level Mall, and in the distance the American flag blows out freely to the wind from the temporary bell-frame on Vista Rock. All that remains of the circle of vision is filled up by the walks and slopes of the southwest part of the Park, with a belt of scattering, cheap, suburban city houses beyond. Only over there to the west, we can see glimpses of the high and woody west banks of the Hudson.

Listen a moment in the stillness. From the drive to the north the multitudinous tramp of horses' hoofs comes back to us, while behind us the tuneless jingle of the car-bells would fain entice us back to the city. No, vulgar siren; you must play on a sweeter instrument. See that wren, hopping and picking up his crumbs within four feet of us, over grass and gravel. He testifies to the good faith with which visitors obey the warning, "Not to annoy the birds."

II.—ARCHWAY, SOUTH OF PLAY-GROUND.

WE retrace our steps a few yards, go carefully down this sloping sheet of bare rock to the footpath below, pass a few yards north, then a little way west, and then, turning sharp round northward again, find ourselves before a granite archway.

The light beneath the bridge was not sufficient to bring out clearly in the picture the finish of the inside of the arch; but a suggestion is visible of the neat banded brick-work and the granite bases, bands, and keystones of the side arches within, and the range of stone seats below.

The effect of this bridge is produced by its solid mass, plain masonry, level top, flattish arch, and the quaint, complex curves in which the abutment wings come spreading down to their final posts. Its only ornamental part (except a very spare allowance of carving, which the whiteness of the material and the shallowness of the cutting render quite invisible in the picture), is in the posts and iron rails of the balustrade at the top; whose simple, decided lines of brown, with a single plain gilt band, express a certain very agreeable straightforwardness of purpose and reserve in decoration.

We pass on northward, up the footpath.

III.—THE LEDGE AT THE PLAY-GROUND.

PAUSE and look at the ledge, before we enter the arbor beyond. Nothing but a shapeless mass of rifted gray rock, and a smooth, level grassy meadow before it. A tame picture, you think? Many a farmer would see in it only an unpleasant reminder of the primeval encumbrance, squatted in a corner of some otherwise perfect mowing lot at home. Nor is it vast enough, perhaps, for sublimity. But this ledge and meadow are to refresh and rest the eyes of over-worked clerks and merchants, sewing-women and school-teachers. To them, the gray ledge and green grass are a letter from a dear and far-off home. Such rocks and meadows were about the rustic birthplace of many of these rightful guests of the Park. In gazing upon this quiet little scene, they will remember with deep pleasure and longing some old farm-house, some little rural river, some shady tract of woodland, all the fresh, sweet influences of the

farm. Nor is this all. To the soul yet living—not deadened by miseducation, nor crusted over by vices, nor seared by the heats of money, and commerce, and ambition—there enter in rest, and peace, and new strength, by only gazing upon the silent green meadow, the immovable gray rock. Fanciful moderns believe that a magnetism from old Earth flows about her human children, and influences them. Perhaps a similar conception was unconsciously the root of the fable of the giant Antæus, the son of Earth, whose strength came always back to him when he touched his mother. Certainly, such a strength or influence does come up, especially from reposeful scenes like this, bathing and refreshing the soul that is rightly alive.

IV.—ARBOR, NEAR PLAY-GROUND.

The picture, glanced at, reminds one of the geometrical variety of spider-web, with its radii and tangential parallels in roof and shadow. And do you observe how grand its dimensions and perspective in the photograph, compared with the real arbor under which we sit? Perhaps a photographer's camera was the secret instrumentality of Dame Margaret Buccleugh. Its effect was not dissimilar, if the picture of the Arbor be any criterion. For, says the poet, her process could make

> "A nutshell seem a gilded barge,
> A sheeling seem a palace large,
> And youth seem age, and age seem youth."

This is no very shady arbor now, truly. But the wistarias and other shading creepers are vigorously climbing all twelve

of the sturdy cedar posts; it will not be long, under the healthy gardening of the Park, before a green roof will flicker down coolness and rest through all the summery hours, when arbors are on duty.

Look around. The Arsenal peeps in upon us from the east, over that great bald-headed, blank rock. Then turn to the fir-planted hill-side that shows through the arbor north of us; look at the white boulder squatted over there on that gray ledge—it is not in the picture, though. Here is another boulder, wide off to our left, south-westward. Others have casually seated themselves in quiet spots further north. Venerable boulders! You have come down to us from a former generation, viz., from the Northern Drift Period. Sir Charles Lyell may think it much to have estimated at blank hundreds of thousands of years the time since you chartered icebergs, and came sailing down to make your little personal observations upon old and new New York. But he seems not to think of the unimaginably grander conception, what is the time, or, perhaps, the eternity, since you were created?

Between that boulder to the north, and this to the right, we can look out upon a wide, level stretch of velvety green grass, unbroken by tree or rock. This is the Play-Ground.

V.—THE TRICOLORED ARCHWAY.

We follow along the footpath still, down the hollow and up the hill, through the archway, and here we perch ourselves on this rock, and turn to view the arch, looking westward. It is straight, severe, and heavy, in mass and effect, but this

heaviness is much relieved by the arrangement of its materials and color, which last the inexorable camera refuses to render. The broad bands of the masonry are of plain Milwaukee or yellow brick; the narrow ones between them of red brick, set so as to give a serrated edge within a channel; the voussoirs and wide keystones of the outer arches are rough ashlar of gray bluish granite, and the upper courses in which the rail is set, and the bases of the archway, of cut granite. And the inside of the arch is finished in lengthwise bands, much like the outside. Observe the thorough dryness of the under side of the arch, here as in the bridge described before. You will find all the arches thus dry; conclusive evidence of skilled and faithful workmanship.

Come; we go a little further east, turn north, and down this easy slope we find the entrance of the Marble Arch.

VI.—THE MARBLE ARCH AND ALCOVE.

DESCENDING, we pass under the arch. Sit down here, close to the entrance, and look forward to the white apse beyond. All this black foreground in the picture is cool gray gravel below, and cool bluish-white marble on sides and ceiling. Seemingly the whiteness of the archway should have reinforced the dispersed light beneath it enough to bring out the architectural traits. But it could not, saith the camera. Only one of the side arches is dimly visible, at the left hand.

A flat arch is turned over head, with pilasters at the sides connected by moulded bands across the ceiling. In the panels between each two pilasters, two round Saxon arches are turned,

on round pillars, with neat Saxon capitals. Stone benches beneath, serve as a base for both pilasters and pillars.

The great mass of white light beyond, is in a transverse space across the upper end of the archway; where, at either hand, granite stairs lead up beyond the Drive, to its further side. That thunderous roll is the crossing of carriages over head; the archway and stairs conduct us, feeble foot folk, safely beyond them. This shadow of a railing is from the bridge-rail above. The alcove beyond the stairway is, like the arch, bordered with stone seats; and is a much frequented resting-place in summer. The unromantic pump adds not to the æsthetics of the spot, but we might haply better spare a better thing. There is an air of cosiness about the low set curve of the arch of this apse, and very graceful and satisfying are the wheels and leafage that decorate its spandrels.

VII.—THE MARBLE ARCH, OUTWARD.

COME half way in and turn and look back. The strong contrast which the picture shows between the black arch and the white light of the picture framed in beyond it, fails us, you see, in the reality. But, looking in this direction, the pilasters and arches are very much more distinct than in the previous picture. No two of the little capitals of these twin arches in the panels are alike; a pleasant and refreshing variety to those brought up on plaster-of-Paris ornaments run in a mould.

We go back again through the Arch, up the right-hand stairway, round to the left, and here we stand, looking up the length of the Mall.

VIII.—THE MALL.

TAKE a seat; on this very Park settee, close in the foreground. A remarkably comfortable settee it is; such as should fill with confusion inhuman Park Commissioners, like those (for instance) of the ambitious city of Hartford, who have conceived in their imaginations the monstrous *non sequitur*, that because the Puritans had stout backbones, their descendants must have nothing to lean against Look about you. Turning round (though you cannot see it in the picture), there is St. Luke's again. Right up the main approach it looks, decorously, sadly, patiently, straight up the Mall, the "open-air hall for dress promenade," the ball-room and parlor of the Park, as if repeating gravely, "He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord."

Is not this a glorious stretch of green in the middle of the great city? Full twenty acres, including the Mall and its immediate neighborhood. But most of this is cut off by the camera, which gives us in the picture only the long perspective of the twelve hundred feet of the Mall, closed in by the decorated stone-work of the bridge above the Terrace. The Music Pavilion is seen on one side, and the Vine-covered Walk on the height where the Concourse for carriages is, at the other. At the hither end of the Walk may be seen a warning: an unruly horse standing there would not keep his head still, and the unrelenting laws of optics cut it off.

Let us walk up the Mall. As we approach the Terrace we may see glimpses of the Ramble, through the gateways of the

Terrace architecture. In this broad, open space, benches are set in the pleasant summer afternoons, and canvas shades are stretched over them when the sunshine is too hot; and here great audiences listen to the Saturday afternoon concerts, which liberal and tasteful citizens pay for, for the pleasure of their fellows. As many as forty thousand in one day have visited the Park on music days. Come and sit down here, for a long look at the Music Pavilion.

IX.—THE MUSIC PAVILION.

"NAOW, in stormy weather, seems as ef that'd orter be enclosed."

Thus observes a rustical dame, to her companion, gazing upon the gorgeous coloring of the Pavilion. It does seem too beautiful to be left about out doors in this manner. It would be as incongruous among snow-drifts as a heap of jewelry and cashmere shawls. I will not come to see it in the winter.

It is really, perhaps, in its essence, a shed to shelter a band of music. But beauty is the utility of the Park, and so elegantly is this idea elaborated and finished, with pleasant form and proportion, rich carving, gilding, and color, that the "shed" is the most attractive specimen of decorative work on the Park, except the grander architecture of the Terrace.

Count up the tiers of coloring from the foundation. Next the strong green of the grass is the gray stone water table, or base for the wood-work. Then come, a broad band of bluish gray; narrow line of olive green; red-brown moulding; broad

band of yellow, with red and black ornamental decoration of pendent leaf forms, seen clearly in the picture; narrow black line; narrow red line; moulding in sky-blue; gilt line; ogee moulding in pea-green, with a leaf decoration in olive-green, each leaf having a little red heart; narrow red line; sky-blue moulding; gilt line; drab band with red-brown devices; red-brown line; indigo-blue moulding; gilt line; red-brown line; green line; and lastly, the ornamental rail-work of leaf designs and intermediate lotuses outlined strongly in white, with a blazing gilt outcry filling in each leaf; as if the predominating secondary colors and combinations of the strata below were to emblematize the successive strains and modulations of an overture or a sonata, while that terminal crash or blaze of color stands for four *fortissimo* measures in the last cadence of the grand finale. The colors of the roof, within and without, are far brighter, as they should be. It stands on six round red posts, with gilt bands and gay capitals. Inside are many fancifully outlined compartments, whose quaint arabesques, indeterminate in curve and combination, are proper to the obscure expressiveness of music. On escutcheons disposed among the gilding, are emblazoned the names of the great masters of music. The cupola, dark blue, sprinkled with gilt stars, is girdled with a coronet of larger stars and alternate trefoils, and one great gilded star crowns the tip of the finial, rising above a lyre, the only common-place device in the whole structure. But let us not grudge this; let us be thankful for what the exquisite and rich Pavilion has not. There is no stupid Apollo nor Melpomene, nor any bunch of fiddles and trumpets tied together with a string. Grace of form, and har-

mony, and contrast of color have, with perfect feeling, been made silent, but effective, handmaids to the music. Only vulgarians want Apollo and a painted fiddle.

X.—THE VULTURES' BANQUET.

THIS bronze group was set on its granite pedestal during the summer of 1863. The name of its giver, G. W. Burnham, Esq., is cut on the lower panel, that of the sculptor, Fratin, being barely visible in the photograph, below the head of the ibex.

These great lammergeiers, tearing and screaming over their bloody banquet, form a very striking and effective composition, and are well placed in this open area at the edge of the Drive. The fierce birds have carried their victim to a rock, and are exulting, after their carnivorous manner, over his carcass. The dark and heavy material is very well managed, and the effect of waving wings and clinging vulturine attitudes is rendered with much success.

XI.—THE VINE-COVERED WALK.

THIS is a fanciful edifice of wooden cross-beams supported on posts, covering an area along the side of that open space called the Concourse. Its even, massive stone base, as seen from the Mall, might, without much effort of the imagination, be figured as a battery erected to command the Mall and the Parade; it represents very well a curtain between two octagonal bastions.

In the distance, the stone-work of the Terrace and the high ground of the Ramble close the perspective to the left. One carriage stands above, at the margin of the Concourse, awaiting its occupants. To the right is the Casino. Below this, at the edge of the picture, some of the light stakes of the wire fence around the deer pen are seen.

We would fain have had photographs of these exquisitely graceful deer; of those fantastic monkeys, the ribald jests of Nature; of the great dark brown eagles, with their shadowing wings, of the parrots, of the splendid silver fox and his red-haired cousin, of the raccoon, the prairie wolf, and the bear. But these animals, otherwise of very respectable merit, have not learned the necessity of "Looking at this corner of the box, if you please, and keeping entirely still." Only an "instantaneous" picture of them could have been had, and it would have been flat and unsatisfactory. The huge tortoise might have been taken, but he has crawled into his hole. We pass, therefore, after turning aside to watch the animals a few moments, up the right-hand path, round the pine tree, and upon the floor of the Vine Walk.

XII.—THE VINE-COVERED WALK, WITHIN.

This view is from the southern end of the Walk. To the right is a strip of the level space of the Concourse. This Concourse is a smooth, open area, where carriages may drive up and stand, while their occupants may dismount, and sit, or stand, or walk about here under the arbor, and look about

them. Of all that may thus be seen, but very little is shown in the picture—bits of the stone-work of the Terrace, portions of the Ramble in the distance, and at the right, over the carriage-wheel, a group of dusky cedars, one of the two or three points in the whole Park where any picturesque qualities were visible when the work was begun.

If, however, you and I step forward to the front rail of the Walk, at the left in the picture, we see spread out before us all the wide grass and gravel floor of the Mall; at a dozen points all around we catch the lively picture of the carriages and riders upon the Drive, and in all directions leisurely groups of promenaders pass to and fro. The glittering pavilion stands in its place like an incarnate, or, rather, an illigneate flame, burning from among the grass. The heavy, rich gray stone work, pierced and carved, of the Drive above the Terrace, stands silent, grave and orderly, to our right, and the two lofty, fanciful, bright red banner staffs, for the flags of the State and the City, taper up beyond. There is a glimpse of the Lake; of the rocky Ramble at its further side, and again there is the Bell Tower in the distance, with the old flag waving above.

XIII.—THE TERRACE—THE PORTALS OF THE MALL.

THE architecture of the Terrace is the most elaborate, thoughtful, finished, and impressive work of art upon the Park, and is a singularly interesting structure. The Terrace and the Pavilion, whose designs and decorations show extraordinary freedom, boldness, breadth, and beauty, in conception and execution, are, in great measure, the work of the same mind;

of one whose decisive use of color with architecture, would quickly betray him to many observing eyes; Mr. J. Wrey Mould, a pupil of Owen Jones, and already well known as the architect of the most beautiful church in New York, that of Dr. Bellows, at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Twentieth Street. The first of our views of the still unfinished Terrace is of the Portals of the Mall.

These are two open gateways with a balustrade carried across the space between, where the inner stairway descends to the Terrace and Fountain. Each gateway is set back from the edge of the Drive in a recess, and is flanked on either hand by its proper system of posts and interposed stone railing. The façade, shown in the picture, gives the range of the eight posts which stand in the line of the Drive-side. The sun has painted them with sharp and faithful touch, rendering well the rich, though grave, effect of the heavy posts, whose finials stand about twelve feet from the ground, the pierced and carved balustrade, the clearly cut outlines of the mouldings, fillets, and ornamental capstones and finials, the pendants carved in the side panels of the posts, the graceful decisive curves and carvings of the terminal buttress at the extreme right, and the light and elegant design of the iron fenders set in front of each post.

All this range of rich architecture is in Nova Scotia sandstone, whose calm gray gives a quiet and pleasant contrast of color with the deep green of the grass and foliage. The smooth finish of the perfect roadways of the Park is well shown in the foreground of this picture.

XIV.—THE TERRACE—THE INNER STAIRWAY.

THE view looks down the broad flight of granite steps leading from the level of the Mall, under the Drive, to the Terrace, the Fountain, the Lake, and the Ramble. It is taken from the landing-place half way down the stairs. The three great flagstones seen in the foreground are about twenty feet long by ten wide. The panelled side walls, the arched way in front, the balustrade and posts above, are all of the Jersey sandstone, which has been chosen for the principal material of the Terrace. It cuts and finishes with a grateful, granular surface, and a peculiar neatness of light and shade; its drawbacks are the occasional ferruginous spots which rust into uncomely stains here and there, and a susceptibility to the influence of frost and moisture.

XV.—TERRACE—A BALUSTRADE POST

WE descend the stairs, pass through the unfinished arcade below, with a sigh after the statuary, and fountains, and bas-reliefs, and frescoes, which Mr. Vaux would willingly promise as the future adornment of its central space and blank niches; and at the left hand we pause before one of the massive piers or posts at the level of the Terrace, and at the end of the balustrade of one of the two outer flights of steps from the Drive. Study for a little while, with me, the details of this one post. It is excellently rendered in the picture, and is well worth a

close examination. The pier itself is a massive stone, more than a yard square, and about ten feet high. Its solid mass, and square, firm setting, make it a fit termination and introduction for the heavy stone rail and wide flight of steps. Notice, next, the just proportions of the mouldings at the base and under the cap; their judicious under-cutting, and successful light and shade; the careful and true cutting of the simple, graceful, foliated rods in which the edges are rounded. Next, the agreeable contrast between the fair, straight lines of the shaft, and the transverse ones of the base of the cap, and the fluent leaf curves of the cap-stone carvings, well relieved by the line of leaf bosses down each midrib, and the fillet of pomegranates carried around below them. Then, consider the skill of the disposition made of the design in the field of the panel on the shaft side; two almond boughs in fruit, not placed as if flung there, but laid decorously together, while a few wheat stems, falling out of the field of the pictorial design above, are weighed down by their laden ripe heads to a pendent right line among the leafy twigs. Wonderfully natural is all this still-life; very wonderful, to be cut in this coarse-grained grit, are all these details of twig, leaf, and stem.

Contemplate finally the pictorial centre of the whole side of the pier; a deep-cut hemisphere, giving quite a field in its depth-diameter, relieved above by the single cusp of its rim, and filled in with a little tangle of "lodged" wheat, upon whose stems stand two quails. One is picking a dinner out of the wheat-heads, and the other looking about him in the suspicious manner of that shy bird. By some mischance, one quail has

lost his bill. I do not remember any other defacement in the Park.

Before we go, see the great variety of the designs that are carved in the centre-pieces of these balustrade panels, and on the posts; and consider their good taste. Here are, among others, a bird's-nest, with one chick just out of his shell, butterflies, bees—big enough to make a table-spoonful of honey at a time,—an ear of corn, roses, fuchsias, tulips, quinces, a deer's head, wild ducks rising from a lake, a net of thorns carved into an open-work closed basket around the centre of the panel, pine-cones, a pair of skates, fern-leaves. Every one is a delicate sandstone allusion to the Park, or something in it or meant by it.

XVI.—TERRACE—THE GRAND STAIRWAYS.

THE view is from beyond the northwestern border of the Lower Terrace, and gives a good idea of the two great outer stairways which lead down from the Drive. Between them extends the graceful Arcade which leads below the Drive to the inner staircase. In the centre of the picture is the heavy stone-work screen across, but at some distance before, the eastern stairway; behind it is intended to stand one of the principal groups of statuary contemplated in the plan of the Terrace. The corresponding screen before the other stairway is not yet erected. At the right hand, the work upon the basin of the Great Fountain is seen in progress. At the foot of the further stairway, a lady and gentleman are standing near the post whose group of quails we just examined. Those

high and massive panelled double pedestals at either side of the upper flight of each stairway, are intended to support at their further ends—those next the Drive—four symbolic statues, of Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age; while upon the four answering pedestals are to stand four great vases of flowers. But little imagination is needed to see how impressively these sculptured figures will stand silently up there, relieved against the sky. Other appropriate groups and figures are intended to be placed at other points.

XVII.—THE GONDOLA.

We return toward the Lake, and skirting along its shore, we pause to examine the Gondola; a real, live Gondola, so to speak, purchased in Venice by Mr. John A. C. Gray, a former Commissioner and good friend of the Park, and sent hither as a gift. Except the strange, flaring, wide-bladed steel ornament, with projecting teeth, at the bow, which is like a shrunken and inverted *aplustre*, such as decorated the Roman galley-stern, and except the brazen arm-rests of the outside seats, it is dead, gloomy black throughout; hull, cabin, deck, and oars. A dreary-looking craft, is she not? a water-hearse. She was not quite still when the picture was taken, so that her bow is indistinct. She should have been pictured empty. It was wrong to man the exiled Venetian craft with six shirt-sleeved Yankees. They are in the right place, but they are the wrong men. The oarsman who stands at the stern is in the gondolier's place. She is propelled by one oar, which is worked with a sort of sculling movement, over that high row-lock on which it rests in the picture.

XVIII.—CASCADE NORTH OF THE TERRACE.

HAVING inspected this foreign nautical visitant, let us step round the next turn in the path, and glance at the little Cascade that falls into the bay round the point close here to the west, opposite the Terrace. I will betray to you one of the secrets of the place. The Commissioners are *ex officio* the Naiads of this fount, and when they will, a more bounteous urn discharges its heavier stream. Yet these slender, flashing threads, and little sheets of water, have their own more delicate charms. This is no imposing show. The picture—like others in this collection—illustrates a class of quiet little nooks, of which very many exist in the Ramble and the Upper Park; whose small attractions unite together into a multitude which is collectively important and delightful, and properly entitled to pictorial commemoration. There are some points in the picture which have their special pictorial value; for instance, the exquisite finish and detail of the rough surface of the rock at the left, and of the disorderly fell of grass and weeds that strays along its face down to the water.

XIX.—THE RAMBLE—RUSTIC SEAT.

WE have thus entered upon a circuit of the Lake; in the course of which we digress, if you please, into the pleasant mazes of the shady Ramble once or twice. Thus now: we retrace our steps, take the first turn to the right, and then quickly another to the left, and ascend the hill to this shaded Rustic Seat.

From the spot where the camera was planted to take this picture, there is a much better view than from the shaded seat itself. Indeed, Mr. Vaux evidently did not mean that those who should rest under this his roof, should see or be seen, so much as rest under shade. And, as you observe by looking at the picture, the structure has an air as if it were just looking out from among the bushes, but did not intend to attract attention. And as we sit down, you perceive at once how delightful a place it must be, on summer evenings, for two lovers to be—interrupted by two other lovers. Study, for a moment, this workmanship. The rustic rails of the seats are tight and strong, and yield to no pull. The roof is in order, and evidently abundantly weather-proof; the seats are solid and the drainage-holes through them are placed where any casual rain-water will run off. Remember these little things, I pray you, when you shall erect a rustic seat on your own elegant grounds.

If we step back to the place of the camera, we obtain a quite commanding view. Far to the east is the ornamental pool, beyond which the conservatory will stand, and the single jet of its fountain is dancing in the sunlight. A sweeping curve of the Drive, populous with carriages, comes down around the hill further south. Before us, across the Lake, are the rich lines and masses of the Terrace, with the Vine Walk and the Casino at the left, and the wide green expanse of the Parade to the right. We gaze a few moments, and return.

XX.—THE RAMBLE—A WALK.

ON our way back again to the Lake side, we pause to look down this quiet bit of shaded, secluded walk. It is characteristic of this charming Ramble. You remember my describing the locality of the Ramble, on a rough hill-side, extending across the Park. It occupies about thirty-six acres, and is nearly all quite thickly planted with trees and shrubbery. Backwards and forwards, winding and anastomosing in every direction all over this surface, runs an intricate plexus of some miles of footpaths. Here and there, at convenient distance, are abundance of seats; and all about in the pleasant summer weather, up and down these mazy, shady walks, loungers are leisurely moving on, and birds and lovers are straying, and flirting, and cooing. Even in this autumn month you still hear the chirping of sparrows, and the peculiar complaining call of the robins to one another in the trees and among the fallen leaves.

This little straight stretch of shaded walk is in the depth of the copse-wood. It is almost arched across with shade already. In one or two more years it will become a dim embowered arbor of rest.

XXI.—THE RAMBLE—RUSTIC SEAT NEAR THE BOW BRIDGE.

WE turn, now, toward the Lake, pass along its margin to the entrance of the graceful Bow Bridge, but turning to the left, leave it behind; take the two next leftward turns also, and so climb up around the evergreen thicket to this fanciful and

graceful rustic seat, one of Mr. Vaux's most fortunate little design.

I heard one name it The Toadstool. One might easily imagine a gigantic cedar mushroom to have jumped up, after the manner of those impulsive agarics, just in the right place some night, and to have been fitted with the seats and the rustic rail. It has, however, received a perhaps better local baptism by the not ill-chosen name of The Umbrella—or, if strictly local operative pronunciation be preferred to Webster's —The Umberill.

From its high nook, deftly sheltered to northeast and northwest by fir and thicker spruce, and the more feathery soft-seeming boughs of white pine, we look upon yet another set of pleasant views. Both the principal basins of the Lake are below us. Beyond it are the Parade and the Drive, toward the right. To the left, is the Terrace once more and the Mall; and see the people ascending and descending the great stairs. They recall to my mind the angels on Jacob's ladder in my grandmother's great Bible.

But all this is not in the picture. Then look for a moment at what is in it; at the peculiarly happy softness and luxuriously delicate shading of the stem of the arbor, and its seats and arm-rests, and of the rustic railing around it. Mere still-life, no doubt; a picture of sticks. But the intelligent eye finds exquisite beauty in that picture of sticks; so fine, so soft, and yet so sharp in drawing, so perfect in perspective; the high lights so fortunately touched in.

XXII.—ARBOR NEAR SCHILLER'S BUST.

WE go northward a little, instead of turning back, and by a short circuit come down a steep slope by a path which leads us through this Arbor to the pathway by the Lake side. Across this pathway you may see projected the shadows of the attentive audience who superintended the operator. A Park-keeper, in his soldierly uniform of gray—he would be scandalized if he knew that he had been taken for a mere shirt—seized the opportunity of immortality; so did the young lady who perches upon the stone outside. Three other less confident, or less pleasing persons, bestowed themselves in the background.

This little Arbor is a favorite seat. I have never passed it on a summer evening without finding a comfortable couple ensconced within. And the sitter in it has very pleasant glimpses of the Lake. I have noted two vagrant kittens who seem to exercise a feline squatter sovereignty in this vicinity, and who will accept contributions, I find, of animal food. Close inspection will show, back of the retiring ladies at the further end of the Arbor, one of the steps by which we came down, and by which there is access to the interior of the Ramble.

XXIII.—RUSTIC BRIDGE NEAR DRIP ROCK.

JUST a step back of the Arbor, we get this view of the little Rustic Bridge, over which we shall pass in a moment, with the colossal bust of Schiller in the background, and three

votaresses—as it might be—but evidently looking at the camera. The scene is very pleasant, and the extremely good execution of this photograph renders it still further worth studying. Observe, for instance, how much there is of what is called "atmosphere;" that is, how well and strongly the boughs of the spruces at both sides of the foreground, and the high weeds between them, seem to stand this side of the picture; how perfect are the shadows in the motionless water; how very delicate the gradations and variations of shade on the rocks and stone steps, and on the cedar railing of the little bridge; and how you can look further and further off up the rocky bank, beyond, among shrubbery, trees, and ledges, until the shadowing boughs shut down too darkly in the distance. Notice the fineness and truth of the minute folds of the ladies' drapery; look as keenly as you choose at the immovable bronze Bust; compare it with the nearer view in No. 25; and you will see how perfectly the head is given in this more distant view, the expression varying, because the face is seen at a less angle of elevation.

XXIV.—THE SAME BRIDGE, AND DRIP ROCK.

This is a nearer view of the same little bridge from the end towards the colossal Bust, together with a portion of the steep, rocky hill-side above it, and the little trickling rill whose scanty course over the wide flattish ledges has given them the name of Drip Rock. Look just at the left of the nearest of the figures in the picture: those three short brown stains on the rock are where the thin current creeps down. That film

of water makes no picture; we only see the rock through it, brown because it is wetted by the invisible film above.

This picture shows the solid structure of the little bridge; the close pebble pavement at its hither end; the large boulder close by, with trailing vines garlanding it, and a fuzzy bunch of broad-leafed grass above, like an ill-dressed wig. There is a glimpse of the dark water in the little pool back of the bridge. The rocks of the hill-side lie beyond. Among them a steep path ascends into the Ramble; and the four respectable gentlemen in position, casually present, favor the world with their full-lengths, which would add much life to the picture had they stood, not as if they were to have portraits and pay for them, but in such attitudes as if they were merely going along, and did not know that there was to be a picture.

XXV.—SCHILLER.

THIS colossal bust is the most striking piece of sculpture yet erected in the Park. The Eagles, at their bloody banquet, are spirited and savage. The Boy with the Swan is graceful and pleasing enough. The Crawford Sculptures are as yet immured in some place of storage, and we know them at present by faith only, and not by sight. But this bust of the powerful German poet, standing with silent majesty in its beautiful nook on the lake-side, is profoundly impressive. It is of bronze, upon a high stone pedestal, and is rendered with great sharpness and truth in the photograph. The massive forehead, full and high, and so remarkably broad, the majestic setting-on of the head, the deep, large grave eyes, the firm

closure of the mouth, the strong jaw—all correspond to the large and vivid and noble independence and positive self-assured strength of Schiller's moral and intellectual character; while the fine modelling of the lips, and the clean cut, sharp lines of the prominent nose, add an impression of sensitiveness, enthusiasm, delicacy, and refinement. The nook where this noble bust stands enshrined is well selected. Rough rocks, and wild trees and vines stand around, rude and untamed by human art, as the nature-loving poet would have had them; and before him the lake lies broad and open for sunlight or storm. Silent and calm, he seems to gaze thoughtfully upon the waters and the skies. And along the pleasant footpath close before, the throng of enjoying visitors passes by; the same humanity which he studied and felt and knew so deeply, so strongly, and so well; so that the memorial of the mighty dead poet is daily begirt with the themes of his song. And almost all of them either know or learn who was he that is represented by this stately head; and the daily and reverential naming of the great poet's name before him, may easily be imagined the soft, unbroken echo in this far transatlantic world, of that stirring applauding cry in the theatre at Leipsic, when the audience recognized among them the author of the drama of the evening, "The Maid of Orleans," and all arose spontaneously together, with a thundering "*Es lebe Friedrich Schiller!*" And long live he—and Germany—and Freedom!

XXVI.—THE CAVE.

WE pursue our way along the skirts of the Ramble, keeping the lake-side path, and turning aside into an opening to our left, among the thick shrubbery, we step out into an open space, upon a great bare rock, and find ourselves upon one side of a deep chasm, at whose further end the Cave opens its dark mouth. The picture gives, with exquisite sharpness and delicacy, the light and shade of the ragged stratified rocks, the fine tracery of the thinly leaved larches, and the darker masses of white pine that crown the height beyond. The cavern below is full of deep shadow; and the sullen and opaque water lies muddy and motionless, as if unkindly water spirits shrouded themselves in its tawny depths. Here is something which the photograph does not show. While we gaze, suddenly a gay group of youths and maidens appears in the furthest depths of the cave; passing over as phantoms glide across a sorcerer's mirror, they disappear at the other side. Phantoms are no part of the Park zoology, however, so far as we know; let us go and see. We follow the path, round by the right, and come in due season down to the opening of a great chasm or fissure, nearly at the water level, splitting the living rock down to an unmeasured depth, from the very upper surface. We enter a quite roomy antechamber, and thence pass through the narrow part of the chasm, out to that open part of the Cave into which the picture gives us a glimpse. Here we find that that enormous block upon which the two persons in the picture—apparently park-keepers—are standing, is an unsupported projection, held up

by the rooted balance of its vast remainder at the side on which we entered, and otherwise seemingly in constant danger of falling. Hence, by steep, narrow and incommodious, but yet highly appropriate, steps, hewn in the solid stone, we climb up again to the sunlight, coming out behind the larches at the left hand of the Cave's mouth.

XXVII.—RUSTIC ARCH, WEST OF RAMBLE.

Having achieved the adventure of the Cave, we will, if you please, turn round to go back again; for we must needs pass through an Arch. We return but a few paces upon our steps, and take the first turn to the left for this purpose, and the path leads under it. We go through, and turn around, and get this view from the west. This Arch has quite the appearance of a ruin, in virtue of the cornice that runs across above the archway, as if there had been other masonry above, and in virtue of the dislocated hewn stones left along the top, as if the few remains of other masonry, that has been torn down. This effect is somewhat heightened by a slight calcareous deliquescence upon the surface of some of the archway stones. Observe the pleasant play of the sunlight upon the upper part of the arch in the picture. The same sunlight, over-abundant upon the foreground deciduous foliage and the white pine beyond, has made them look as if all tipped with snow. A path runs along the top of the archway. We should have come into it from the right of the picture, had we followed straight on from the other side of the Cave. It soon joins into the maze of walks of the Ramble.

XXVIII.—THE OAK BRIDGE.

TURNING from the Arch, we go straight back to the Lake, and resume our circuit. Passing to the right, we quickly reach the Oak Bridge, which spans the northern arm of the Lake, and crossing to its further end, we look back upon View XXVIII. In this picture the peculiar softness and tone of the shading are such, that it looks like a moonlight view. It was a mid-day picture, however, the shadows falling across its floor from a little to the east of south. The Oak Bridge is named from its principal material. The stout posts, which stand in such a long perspective, the rails, and other portions of it, are of solid white oak. The foreshortening, the tips and edges of high light along the balustrade, and the dark background beyond, give spirit to the scene. A bevy of ladies in the path to the right stand with that patient interest which will make most persons so amenable to orders, if, by obeying, they can be pictured. Beyond them is seen the rustic roof of a boat-landing, nestling under the rocky bank; still further on, rock, tree, and water make a varied and beautiful background; and the Lake stretches away to the right, the view reaching across one of its longest diameters.

XXIX.—OAK BRIDGE—SECOND VIEW.

THIS view is taken from a little way down the western side of the Lake. This path, from this bridge eastward, past the Cave and Schiller's Bust, over the Bow Bridge to the Terrace, the Mall, the Vine-clad Walk, and the Animals, is the most fre-

quented portion of the Park. You see in the view what an audience our operator enjoyed, and how motionlessly they waited upon his manipulations. There is almost all the time a row of gazers leaning over the balustrades of this bridge, feeding of watching the swans. These magnificent birds haunt this nook of the Lake pretty assiduously, several of their feeding troughs being anchored north of the bridge, and many casual contributions accruing from passengers. The western bank is cropped quite clean by their pasturing on the grass, and is all flecked with swans' down. Indeed, this Bridge ought to be named the Swans' Bridge. Among the swans, are two black ones, with rose-red bills; and, also, an Ugly Duck, a West Indian creature, with preternatural long legs; and some white ducks, also. We have no swan in any picture. They can rarely be taken, except by an "instantaneous" picture, which is flat and imperfect, as a work of art. They will not stay still long enough for the sun to copy them.

XXX.—RUSTIC BRIDGE—WEST ARM OF LAKE.

We pause upon the broad Stone Bridge which carries the Drive over this arm of the Lake, and look over its western balustrade, up to the little Rustic Bridge above. In this view may be seen the same moonlight effect as that referred to on the Oak Bridge. The narrow inlet winds between two steep banks, passes under the Rustic Bridge, and widens out beyond into quite a breadth of water, a secluded little bay, sometimes called the Ladies' Skating Pond. The Bridge itself is a plain and strongly-built way, carrying the footpath across. The pic-

ture is a good one, and the bold relief of the point of rocks at the left, its perspective, and the shadows on the water, are very agreeable.

We follow the footpath to the left of the Drive from this point, and now we shall coast along the whole western shore of the Lake, to its southern end. The walk is very pleasant. On one side, a lively throng on the Drive and the footpaths keep us unfailing company; on the other, the water, sometimes plashing close at our feet on a little open beach, sometimes seen through thickets or trees, attends us as closely. Out on its surface, here and there, the swans and ducks sail about in fleets or on solitary cruises. Sometimes a select party of stately white swans is bustling and diving for crumbs as greedily as so many gray geese. Some of the splendid birds will eat out of your hand. But remember what the wise old Professor said, that "If they hit you with their wing, they will break a horse's leg." Therefore, be careful "Not to Annoy the Birds."

XXXI.—RUSTIC LANDING PLACE, SOUTH OF LAKE.

THIS little boat-landing is nearly at the end of the southernmost bay of the Lake. It is framed of cedar, after Mr. Vaux's design, in the normal and agreeable Park manner. The view looks west of north, and is taken from a sloping rock south of the boat-landing, and on the road towards it. The path by which we skirted the Lake in coming hither from the region of the Oak Bridge, runs along the shore to the left, in the view; and past the boat-house itself, may be seen, indistinct

from distance, the shore of the northwest part of the Lake. The little edifice stands strongly out against the quiet water. To the right, the pebbles in the path show with a curious clearness, and at the edge of the view one of the compendious field-codes of Park regulations is seen in its little camp-stool-like frame; a sort of curule chair for the edicts of the Commissioners to repose in.

From this point we pass onward along the Lake shore, skirting close down to the water upon a pleasant open beach for much of the distance, until we reach the Bow Bridge.

XXXII.—THE BOW BRIDGE.

We will sit down on one of the seats that await us here on the path, and look upon the Bow Bridge from this spot, a few yards south of it. It is beyond comparison the most beautiful bridge, and is one of the three most beautiful constructions, in the Park. The other two are the Music Pavilion and the Terrace. This bridge crosses the narrow strait between that part of the Lake immediately before the Terrace, and its broader western expanse. It is of iron except its floor of clean plank; with sandstone abutments, and painted of a shade very similar to that of these abutments.

The curves and proportions of this arch are apparently simple, but are extremely subtle and refined in trace and combination; their elements being conic and not circular curves. The arch somehow seems to leap out with a lithe forward spring, like a leopard's, instead of the upward bound which higher arches take; and thus its long low curve gives

an impression as it were of sinewy active vigor, purposeful and progressive, in place of the burdened massiveness of a flat bridge with piers or arches, or the upward spring of a higher single arch. The duplicated chain tracery of the pierced parapet gives remarkable lightness to the general effect, and a singularly elegant finish is added by the four great shapely vases upon the parapet at either end, crowned with luxuriant wreath-growths of flowers and vines. Below the arch, a boat-landing is seen, and the "Umbrella" stands in the high horizon above, on the brow of the nearest hill in the Ramble.

XXXIII.—THE BOW BRIDGE PARAPET.

THIS second view is a decisively fore-shortened one, from the same side of the Bridge, but from a point close to one end of the parapet. It shows in strong light and perspective the peculiar curves of both parapet and footway, the easy outlines of the flower vases, the fanciful effect of their four handles, and the untrained grace that Nature adds by contrasting the wilder lines and masses of the vines and flower growths, against the set symmetrical manufacturing of the artist. These flower vases, so characteristic and so prominent, ought in fact to furnish the name of the Bridge. It should be called the Flower Bridge.

In this view is seen much more distinctly than in the previous one, the little landing-place at the further shore and the large rock behind it.

XXXIV.—THE NOOK IN THE RAMBLE.

We go onward from the Bridge, and pursuing for a few steps the path we followed before in ascending to the "Umbrella," we penetrate into the interior of the Ramble, by devious ways that in two or three turns leave us with little idea whither we are going. Past embowered seats, and a quiet pool with one or two ducks unobtrusively dabbling in it; up and down various gravel walks; at last, turning aside through a sort of gateway in the rocks that line the path, we find ourselves in this curious Nook, walled round with shelving gray rocks, and containing at its further extremity a log formed into a rustic seat. It is a very silent place, oddly hidden; where—were it not for the chance visitors who would peep in and frighten away one's stray thoughts—one might sit and meditate and fancy and write all some long summer day.

The camera has given, with exquisitely sharp and delicate detail and finish, the half conchoidal surfaces of some of the rocks, the play of light on their rough faces and in their rifts and hollows, the slender stems and their leafage among them, the peculiar shallow fluting and channelling of the barkless brown log and the stray leaves sprinkled here and there over the earth. We may sit a few moments, either on the log or on the other seat, at one side of the nook, and then we will go on.

XXXV.—STEPS IN THE RAMBLE.

A FEW yards further we ascend these steps. The scene is merely one more of the quiet little views of which there are so many in the Ramble. Rocks shut in the pathway on either side; the trees and the thick shrubbery veil it off from the rest of the world; while above, the bare slanting bed of gneiss seems to forbid any further progress. But just as the way seems utterly to fail, it opens to a wider space; for on one side we can mount the very ledge that seemed to forbid us, and find ourselves all at once on a breezy open point, from which we can see almost all over the Lower Park. And on the other side we enter a wider pathway, and skirt along an open, sunny stretch of meadow, with the heavy wall of the old Reservoir to the north of it, first eastward, then at a sharp angle westward, toward the Bell Frame, which now stands out clear and high above us on Vista Rock.

XXXVI.—THE BELL FRAME.

This is a temporary structure, a sort of carpenter's horse, elaborated into a four-square framed steeple, in which hangs the workmen's bell. But it is far too universally conspicuous to be omitted from this book. Vista Rock is the highest ground in the Park. On it is ultimately to stand an ornamental stone tower, for an observatory, and for the banner-staff of the flag of the United States. The flag is usually hoisted here now. But our flag, like our nation, is sure to be in motion when there is a breeze; and, accordingly, the picture of it is a kind of ghost. Just beyond the Bell Frame the blank wall of the Reservoir lies heavily and level across the picture; and over it is visible a mere glimpse of the water inside, and of the buildings to the northeast, beyond Fifth Avenue. Let us go up to the second floor.

First, let us look back to the south. From this high and open place we can see once more, on a new scale, in new relations to a larger landscape, many of the subordinate views which we have been considering singly. The Lake gleams up to us from beyond the Ramble; while at its further side the grand stairs of the Terrace, and the Mall behind, lie in a very striking perspective. All the Lower Park is spread out before us in one great, beautiful picture; while the city lies, dismal and distant, outside of our paradise.

XXXVII.—THE RESERVOIRS.

LOOK northward now, over the sheets of water which occupy this view. Very different is the impression upon the mind of the largeness and unity of such a picture as this, from that produced by the complex intermingling of so many artificial and natural objects together in the southward view. One excites and interests, the other calms and inclines to revery; one is joyous in feeling, the other grave. This is one of the best of our pictures; clear in outline and effect, soft and pleasant in tone. Consider the agreeable perspective of that long line of paling, which runs up to the second barrier, and the trees behind it, in the distance; the delicate lights and shadows of the rock in the foreground, and the sharpness of its relief against the water. The stone wall in the foreground divides the Park jurisdiction from that of the Croton Board. The middle line across the picture is the wall dividing the Old Reservoir into two parts; and the third line is the northern wall of the same Reservoir. The New Reservoir stretches away beyond it, carrying the water view so far towards the horizon as to give quite a sea-like range of vision.

XXXVIII.—STREET TUNNEL UNDER VISTA ROCK.

WE descend from the Bell Frame, and at some distance to the westward, on the margin of the traffic road (Seventy-seventh Street), whose chasm cuts across the Park close to the south end of the Old Reservoir, we get this view of the western end of the Tunnel under Vista Rock. This is a roughly arched way, pierced through the solid rock. The great, heavy, beetling mass, bare of earth, that overhangs its front, undoubtedly will not fall, but somehow you think, as you look at it, what if it should fall while I was under it? To the left, the wall of the Reservoir rises stiffly above the bank, surmounted by an unpicturesque paling. It is a pity that the Croton Board could not have embodied their utility in a somewhat more beautiful form.

XXXIX.—ARCHWAY WEST OF RESERVOIR.

PROCEEDING westward to the Drive, we cross it, and following the footpath, we soon come to the Archway which carries the Drive over both bridle road and path, leading northward along the strip which connects the Upper and Lower Parks, between the Reservoirs and Eighth Avenue. This is a wide and roomy arch of grayish granite, with sandstone upper courses and archway facing. The inside of the Arch is of smooth brick. The view is taken from the south side of the path, west of the Archway; and is at an angle which exhibits very clearly the spirited curves of the abutment wings, and the plain and substantial masonry and finish of the whole. The iron railing is a neat and strong one, and the open-work ornamental caps over the posts at either end, have a noticeably rich effect.

We go through the Archway, and forward toward the Upper Park, in whose further portion are three views, which you should see. At the right hand, as we go, is the high blank Reservoir wall. The footway goes through quite a plantation of stout young firs—a future grove. The throng of carriages to our left is constant. Here is an old house, just at the northwest corner of the old Reservoir, looking blind and forlorn in its weatherworn paint and closed shutters. A score or so of willows, of the American and of the weeping varieties, stand irregularly about. There are two children in the back yard. Somebody lives there, then. We reach the latitude of the new Reservoir, and coast along its whole western edge, the people at

the further side of the vast artificial lake looking only about an inch high. At its northwestern point we step into the foot-path again, and pursuing it along east of the Drive, we bear away to the northeastward, among open meadows, rocky tree-crowned knolls and vistas, opening in one direction and another, to a point on the longer axis of the Park. southwest of Mount St. Vincent.

XL.—ARCHWAY NORTH OF MEADOWS.

THE view of this Archway is from a point southwest of it in the walk approaching it, and, of course, from higher ground; several steps lead us down to it, and the archway itself, slants downward to the further or northern side of the Drive. It is of a close-grained heavy blue stone. The voussoirs are alternately picked and hammered, and the moulding above is cut and smoothed; and so differently does the finish of the surface affect the color of the material, that out of one kind of stone is here obtained the effect of three. The buildings seen at the right are those of Mount St. Vincent. The round-leafed vine that trails so plentifully over the bank in the foreground, with that quaint, scaly effect, is nasturtium.

XLI.—ARCHWAY AND CASCADE.

WE descend the steps, pass down a few paces under the Archway, and, turning round, we see this little view. The Arch cuts down into the picture, with its heavy black mass, defining it sharply and judiciously; for, if we move forward a step or two, the arch line lifts above the young trees on the knoll, and they seem petty.

To the left hand is a Cascade, which falls into a basin, whose outlet is invisible; a little water-fall, which lends the life of its constant motion and of its spattering voice, to the quiet landscape. The masonry of the steps, and the well-managed grouping of the rocks about the cascade, have a rough character, which suits the scene; and the peculiar round-leafed nasturtium, with its foreign air, curiously individualizes the place.

XLII.—CASCADE NORTH OF MEADOWS.

Upon passing quite through the Archway to the north, two steps bring us to the margin of this second little Cascade, from whose basin a brooklet flows away to the northeast, with a fussy affectation of immense business. A clump of young trees on the knoll above, to the west, shades the basin; the clear water falls in little sheets, and streams from one rock to another, with a constancy in form which is especially noticeable in the upper pitch of the cascade, and which gives a photographic impression of that portion almost as perfect as that of the rocks about it. The air-bubbles in the lower fall, and those driven down by it into the basin below, render part of the picture much more indistinct as to detail, giving a mere mass of white light. The broad, single sunbeam falling across the rocks affords some very beautiful light and shade, and the photograph is very successful in representing so perfectly the rock surfaces and the herbage among them.

XLIII.—THE POINTED ARCHWAY.

THE three pictures at the Meadow Archway are all that we give from the Upper Park. We return to the south side of the Drive and follow on in the path by which we approached it, eastward along the skirts of the Meadows, past the irregular block of buildings at Mount St. Vincent, then southward for a stretch of just about a mile. We coast along the Drive; arrived at the new Reservoir, we ascend and walk by the water-side; then passing over the unfinished area in the angle between it and the old Reservoir, down nearly to its southeastern corner, we go eastward through the Pointed Archway, and from that side we turn to look. The bank, oddly speckled with the spots of new earth at recent plantings; the broad approach, and the archway with the plane-tree standing sentry at its side, form a very agreeable little scene. The archway is, I believe, the only pointed one in the Park, and the spirited feeling of its upward lines and point is a pleasant contrast with the quieter sentiment of the usual low arch lines. Its voussoirs are of alternate brown stone and bluish limestone, and the colors have a very delicate and rich effect. The interior is lined with smoothly finished red brick, banded and starred with brown stone and limestone; and the coloring, all together, gives the impression of a delicately hued purple arch.

XLIV.—ARCHWAY NEAR DOVE-COTE.

FOLLOWING our footpath, we quickly reach another Archway, which carries us again under the Drive. South of it, we rest a few moments on the settee by the walk-side, while we observe it.

This Archway is, again, of the more usual level and massive character; a low archway, and a heavy, carefully cut balustrade. It is all of Nova Scotia sandstone, and the plain solidity of the masonry is ingeniously relieved by laying the stone diagonally, and showing its transverse slants by means of a slight chamfer at their edges.

XLV.—THE BOY AND THE SWAN.

THE Dove-Cote, a curious wire house, with wooden stands inside for the nests and roosts, is unfinished, and, with a hasty look at it, we go past the north end of the ornamental pool, by which the Conservatory is to stand, and find the Fountain of the Boy and the Swan.

The group is of lead, bronzed, and stands yet upon a temporary base. Observe the picture for a moment. A basin of some fifty or sixty feet across, is it not—and a colossal swan, and a boy of considerable size? Not at all. The cunning camera deludes us again. The swan is of the natural size; the boy about three feet high; the basin, say, fifteen or twenty feet across. The swan flaps his wings, standing with neck erect and head thrown back, firmly pedestalled on his strong, broad black feet; and up from his open bill spouts the single jet, playing and sparkling, waving its watery flag in the wind, and spattering down, now in the water, and now on the gravel walk; while the metallic boy, wet, and not entirely at his ease, leans on his web-footed pet, looks up to see where the water will fall next, and would fain keep it out of his eyes with his hand. He is not the only young person who would avert present evils without removing away from them.

XLVI.—SUMMER-HOUSE NORTH OF ARSENAL.

PROCEEDING southward from the side of the pool where the Fountain stands, and ascending a rock, we enter the Summer-House, the view of which is, however, taken from the south side. It is strong and heavy, as befits an edifice erected upon this massy ledge. Its main posts and plates are of chestnut, the remainder of its framing and roof of cedar. The walls are of panels of rustic open-work, set in between the posts; and the floor is paved with heavy flagstones. The crest of the ledge on the east shuts off the raw streets on the Fifth Avenue side; while there is a wide and open prospect in other directions, south to the old Arsenal, and over the rocky ledges of the southwest part of the Park, by the west over the Mall and the Parade, and northward to the even high horizon line of the old and new Reservoirs.

XLVII.—THE OLD ARSENAL.

DESCENDING by a steep pebble-paved foot-way, we go still southward under the heavy sandstone Archway which carries the first traffic road past the north end of the Arsenal, and, passing to the west of the building, we turn to view it.

The Old Arsenal is of date older than the Park, and is not, properly, a part of it. But, perhaps, no one picture would be more inquired after if it were not here. It is a battlemented edifice, with turrets; about two hundred feet by fifty; four stories high; of brick, partly covered with a weather-worn coat of gray paint; and with iron-shuttered windows. It will, doubtless, be torn down before long, to make room for the commodious, elegant, and dignified building which the Commissioners desire to have erected in this part of the Park for the New York Historical Society, and, perhaps, other literary or scientific institutions. At present, the Arsenal serves as a storehouse, stable, and engineering head-quarters—a sort of industrial citadel.

XLVIII.—THE OVAL BRIDGE.

Westward, a path leads us to the Bridle-Road. We will follow this across the lower end of the Park, to the Eighth Avenue gate. It is "For Equestrians Only;" but we shall be tolerated. There are three archways which we must see. A few rods from the Arsenal is a stone one, but it is not so pictorial in character. We pass through it, a little further through another not very dissimilar, and soon reach the Oval Bridge, of which our view is taken from the west side. Its name is adopted from the peculiar oval outline of its arch. It is of iron, painted a uniform dark-red brown. The view shows clearly and well the clean simple lines of the principal mouldings along the archway, the general effect, though not the details, of the balustrade, and part of the perforated decorations of the haunches of the arch. It is a pity that one of its chief beauties is hidden by the creeping vines trained over it. This is, the airy lightness and local grace of outline and effect of the great ornamental segmented wheels pierced through the haunches of the arch. The summer draperies of green might easily be trained away from these openings. Under the arch is seen part of the hill-side beyond, and of a great sheet of bare rock, all grayish with lichens.

XLIX.—THE FLYING FOOT-BRIDGE.

A FEW rods further and we approach this Foot-Bridge, of airy tracery seemingly so slender and so frail. It leaps across the wide Bridle-Path with one single low curve, and so light does the web of its balustrade seem, that we fancy a wilful child might break it down. But come under it. These two main beams, on whose bosses and ornaments the light glints in the picture, you now see to be ponderous and solid castings. The cross-ties are of a stiff and strong T-rail pattern, and stoutly bolted through the plank cushions above them, in which is secured the planking of hard Carolina pine. It is a very strong structure. Observe with what good judgment it is planted between those two natural abutments of living rock. A better photograph would have been obtained on a cloudy day. It is because the light gray balustrade stood up in the flooding sunlight against the clear sky, that its details are somewhat obscurely given.

L.—ARCHWAY WEST OF PLAY-GROUND.

WE now follow the Bridle-Path to the Drive, cross the Drive to the footpath, and following that, around a semicircle, come down to the last Archway of our series, the southwestern-most of the system which conveys the footpaths of the Park over or under the Drive and Bridle-Path. The view is taken from the eastern side of the Archway. A breeze was stirring the broad leaves of the catalpas at the right hand, and the finer leafage on the other side of the footpath, so that the leaves which should be sharply cut, are somewhat confused in outline. The Archway itself is well rendered. It is of the more usual massive style, its level heavy character being somewhat relieved by the shapely network of the balustrade, cut through the solid stone. The abutments are pointed, and the Archway based with a fancifully streaked coarse white stone, while the balustrade, buttresses, and voussoirs are of the usual sandstone. The arch is low, and of a subtle hyperbolic curve, that curiously detains the thoughtful eye. The lining of the Archway is of clean, smooth, accurately laid brick-work; the path below almost housewifely neat. Speak aloud, and hear the booming echo, vibrant and resounding like the lower pedal bass in a heavy organ. We retrace our steps through the Archway, and quickly reach the southwestern angle of the Park.

We have now completed a circuit of the Park, and by a route which gives us a view of at least a fair selection of its natural and artificial attractions. And passing out—if we choose—at this corner, we may take either an Eighth Avenue car for the Astor House, from which we set out, or a Tenth Avenue and West Street car, which gives us choice of disembarkation all along the western skirts of the city, from the Central Park to the Battery. Farewell.